



MOBILITY AND CLIMATE

2023 Regional Transportation Plan Update

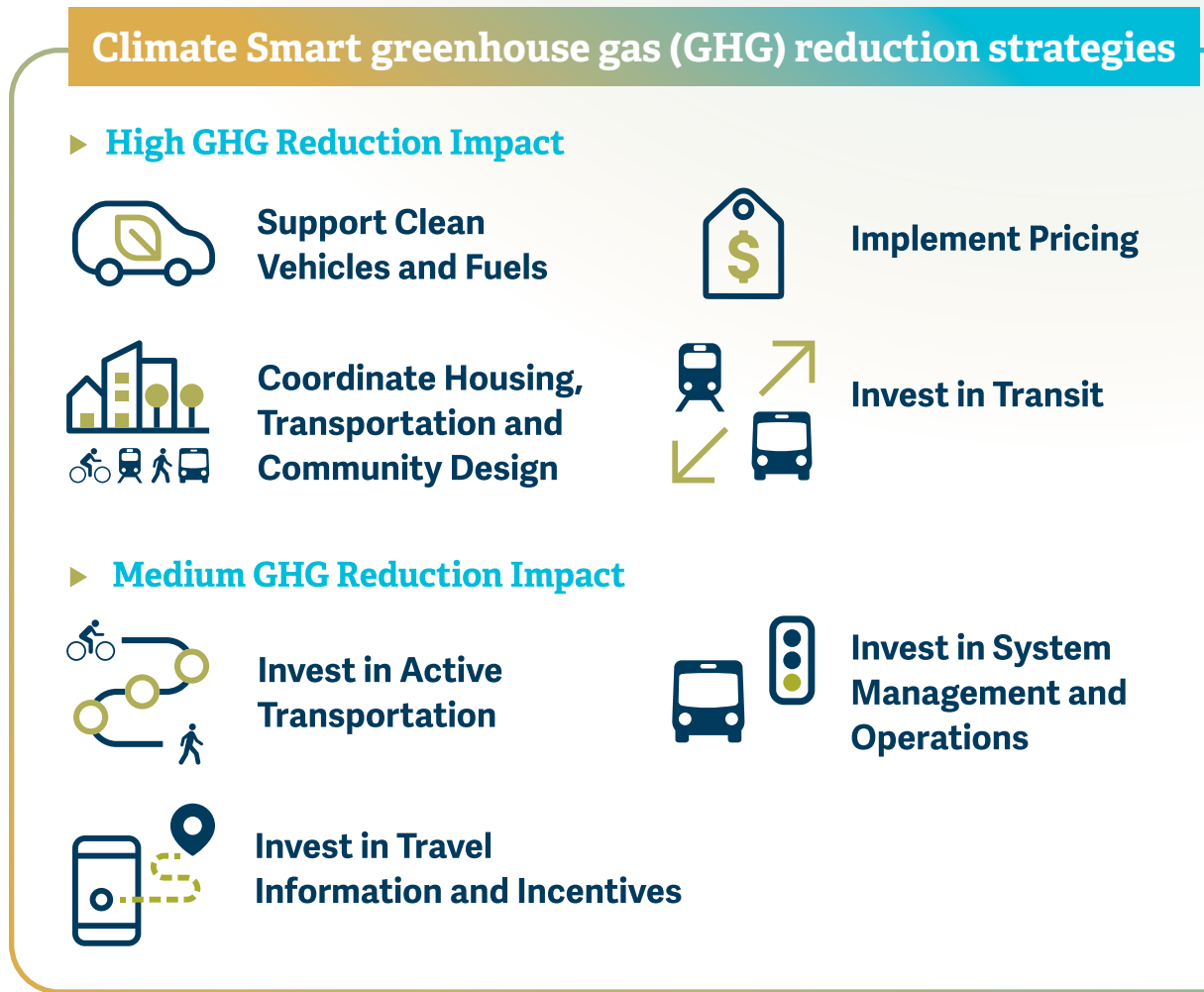
Creating and improving transit and active transportation connections between where people live and important destinations is fundamental to achieving mobility and climate goals.

Mobility and climate policy context

The 2023 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update includes significant changes to regional mobility and climate policies. The updated Regional Mobility Policy replaces an interim policy that was focused on reducing congestion for drivers with standards that address a greater variety of modes and outcomes. The Climate Smart Strategy is being updated in response to new state climate policies and updated greenhouse gas reduction targets. The strategy identifies a range of approaches, many of which involve making it more convenient for people to use transit and active transportation, to meet these targets. These approaches are shown in Figure 1.

The updated Regional Mobility policy recommends new performance measures to assess mobility for the region, including vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita and system completeness, which are also measures the region uses to track the implementation of the Climate Smart Strategy.

Figure 1. Greater Portland Climate Smart Strategies



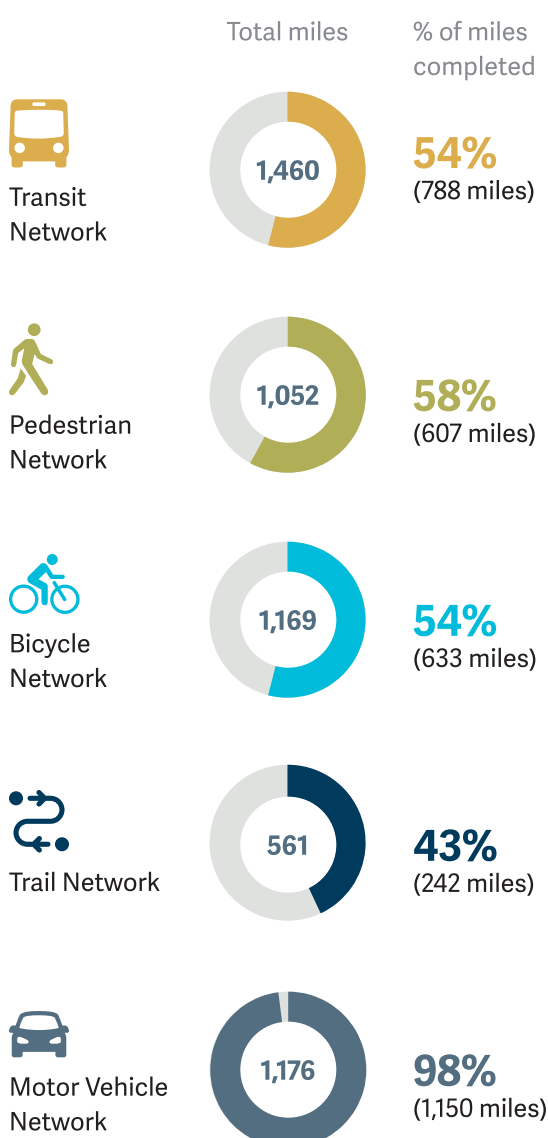
Transportation system completeness

Meeting mobility and climate goals depends on completing the multimodal transportation system so that people have multiple options for making trips. Figure 2 summarizes the completeness of different regional modal networks.

The RTP prioritizes completing bicycle and pedestrian connections in the places where they are most useful for people, including near transit, along arterials, and within urban centers. The regional bicycle and pedestrian networks are 60% to 70% complete in these key areas— which is greater than the regional averages between 50% and 60% that are shown in Figure 2.

Metro creates maps of the gaps in the region's different transportation systems as part of the RTP call for projects to help partner agencies identify opportunities to complete the transportation system.

Figure 2. System completeness by modal network



Did you know...

- Between 2015 and 2020, the region grew significantly—by 135,000 people (an 8.4% increase); 57,000 households (8.9%); and 90,000 jobs (10.1%)—and this growth is projected to continue.
- Overall, the planned motor vehicle network is much more complete than the transit or active transportation networks.
- Teleworking is a fast-growing mode. In 2020, 10% of workers teleworked, and that number rose dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Per capita VMT in the greater Portland region has been significantly lower than the national average since 1997 and has mostly been flat or declining, even during times when the region has grown rapidly.
- During rush hour, the average traveler can reach 43% of jobs in the region by driving and 7% by transit.

Vehicle miles traveled trends

VMT per capita measures how many miles the average person in the Portland region drives each day. As shown in Figure 3, per capita VMT in the region has been significantly lower than the national average since 1997. There has been a general downward trend, with a few exceptions during economic booms, over the past 25 years. However, between 2010 and early 2020 (see below) there was little or no decline in VMT per capita.

In an era when high housing costs make it challenging for many people to live in transportation-rich neighborhoods, the region may need to take new approaches (such as congestion pricing) or prioritize high-impact strategies (such as expanding frequent transit, creating more affordable housing in regional centers, and increasing the use of parking pricing) to meet ambitious greenhouse gas and VMT reduction targets.

Figure 3. VMT per capita for the region and the US

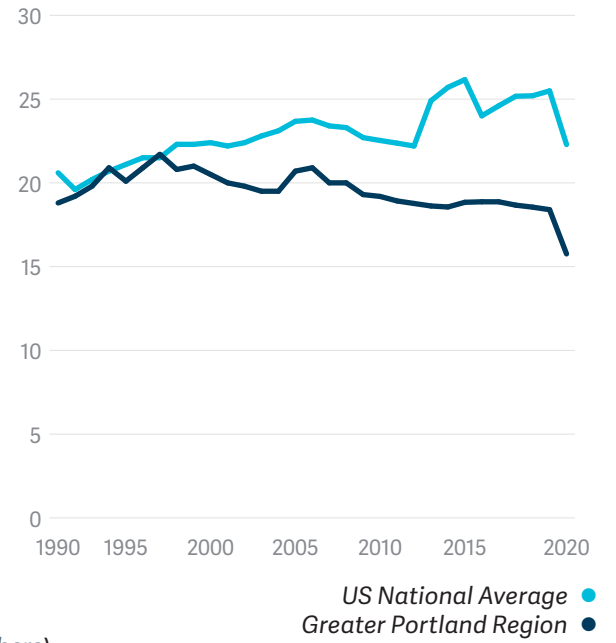


Figure 4. Home-based VMT per capita by Metro transportation analysis zone (TAZ) (explore this map in more detail here)

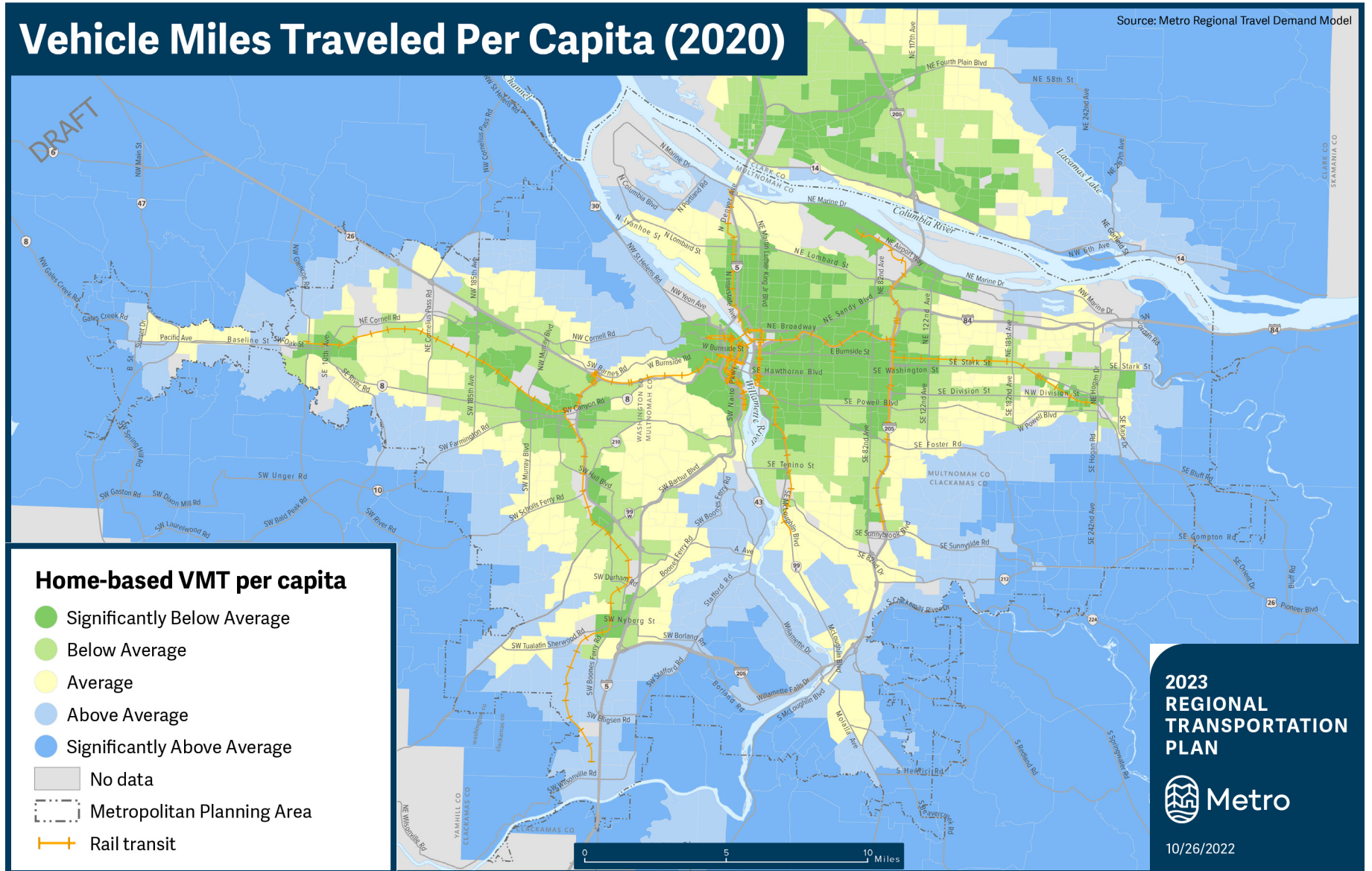
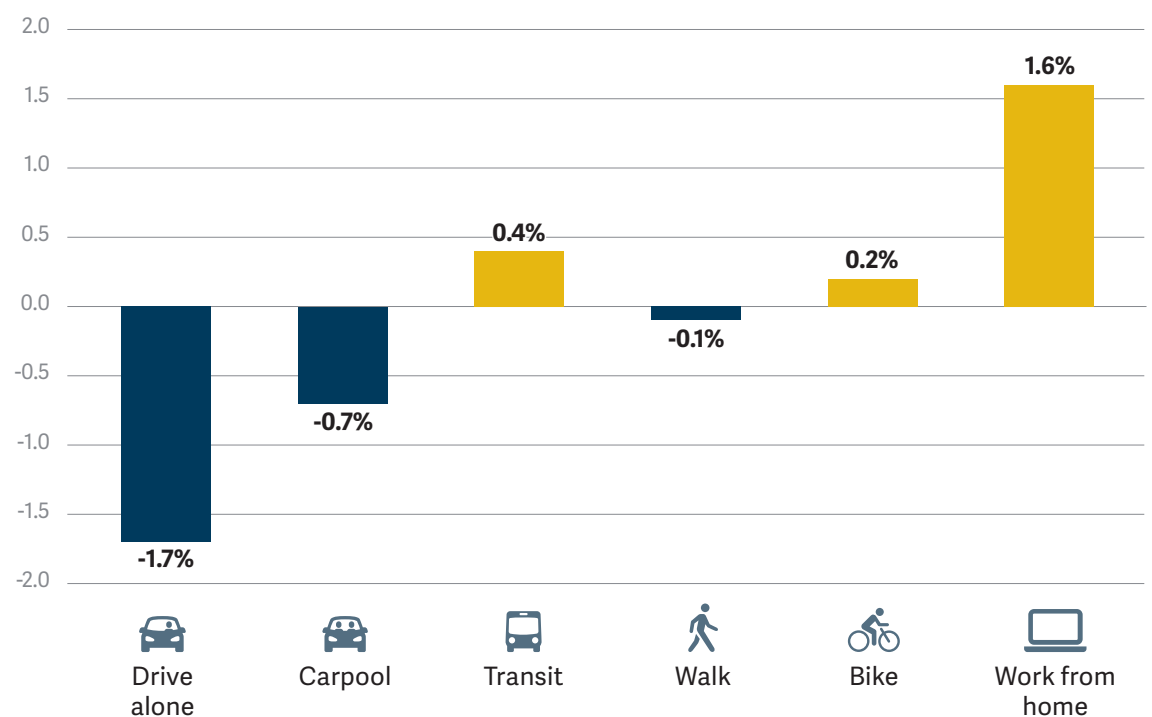


Figure 4 shows how home-based VMT per capita varies across the region. VMT per capita is lower in regional centers, along frequent transit lines, in many of the region's older neighborhoods, and in other communities that are rich with travel options.

VMT per capita is determined in large part by the share of trips that people take by modes other than driving. Reducing private vehicle trips is a significant part of reducing VMT per capita. Figure 5 shows change in regional mode shares for commute trips over the past decade. The share of people who drove to work, whether alone or in a carpool, fell, while the share of people who worked from home rose.

Figure 5. Change in mode share, 2010-2019



Based on US Census Bureau's 5 Year American Community Survey Estimates 2006-2010, and 2015-2019 for all tracts that intersect the Metro boundary